

EXHIBIT A



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Letters to the Editor: Vulcans' FDNY Non-Solutions

To the Editor:

Jul 13, 2007

Vulcans' FDNY Non-Solutions

The final week of June saw a young Indian girl being rejected for admission to Mark Twain Junior High School in Brooklyn because it filled its quota of 40-percent minorities. Outrage followed and Schools Chancellor Joel Klein called for the abolishment of the quota system.

If he is not successful, I would hope the same outrage exists if my two children, who will test for Mark Twain in two years, are not admitted because the school filled its quota of Caucasians.

The latter part of the week featured John Coombs, president of the FDNY Vulcan Society, as the Daily News guest editorialist. Although the Vulcan president has changed, the whine remains the same. Firefighter Coombs starts by telling us that bigotry in the FDNY existed in the late 1800s. No kidding. The predominantly Irish Fire Department hated everyone, especially Italians such as myself.

He further rambles about the current testing procedures and how a candidate who gets a 90 or even an 80 could be better-qualified than the one who gets 100 on the exam. Wake up, John. The candidate who scores a 90 on a basic comprehension exam is not the best candidate, and the one who scores an 80 is a borderline idiot.

Firefighter Coombs then calls on the FDNY to "stop perpetuating a system that keeps this great city career as the domain of those who often live outside the City and are disproportionately the sons, brothers and nephews of firefighters." Shame on you for leaving out the daughters, sisters and nieces of firefighters.

His solutions to solving the lack of interest by African-Americans in joining the FDNY are shallow. A five-point credit for any candidates with a New York City high school diploma and the launching of a serious recruitment effort (not to be confused with the multi-million-dollar drive that the department ran for the last exam).

Another idea of his is that the written test be pass/fail and the physical be competitive. How naive of him to think that white males won't do better in a competitive physical than blacks. It also sounds racist.

He also states that the FDNY had its chance to come to the table with the Vulcans and resolve problems with them informally (quotas), but it refused. Kudos to Commissioner Scoppetta.

Now the Justice Department has filed its lawsuit, and again to the credit of our Mayor and Fire Commissioner, they vow to fight it all the way to the Supreme Court, if necessary. And fight they should. Candidates of any race and gender must seek out the job of FDNY firefighter the old-fashioned way. They must earn it.

On a final note of interest, a recent survey of music shows that among rappers, 99 percent are males and 97 percent are black. Where's the justice?

MICHAEL F. GALA Jr., Battalion Chief, FDNY

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A Dissenting View

To the Editor:

Feb 15, 2008 Updated Aug 15, 2011 0



I must agree with Battalion Chief Delbert Coward's assessment (Feb. 8 letter) of Deputy Chief Paul Mannix's Jan. 25 letter.

When will Chief Mannix realize that he is not the self-anointed gate-keeper of the FDNY? Stop it, Paul. Stop it now. The self-anointed gate-keepers of the FDNY are in fact John Coombs, president, FDNY Vulcan Society; Paul Washington, former president, FDNY Vulcan Society; and newly-designated "activis" and now Battalion Chief Delbert Coward, FDNY.

These apparently are the men who have all the answers as to what's wrong with the face of the New York City Fire Department. Simply

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stated, it is too white. It is not black enough.

They stressed that the FDNY and our Commissioner failed the citizens of this city, as hard as they tried to diversify. If Chief Coward wants someone to say it straight and in uncomplicated English, I will. If you are a black firefighter in this department and you have an opinion, then speak up, brother. If you are a female firefighter, then you may speak up as well. However, if you are a white male firefighter, keep your bigoted, racist opinions to yourself.

Are you happy, Chief? I have also spoken out in this paper about the merit system and have been called both a bigot and a racist for expressing those opinions. God forbid someone started an FDNY white firefighters association. Imagine the field day the race-baiters would have with that.

I am tired of listening to black and female firefighters who have earned their positions in

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this department or who have risen through the ranks on their own merits and yet condemn the same system that facilitated that rise. Chief Coward has excelled at one entrance exam and three promotional exams to attain his current position. And he is well-respected for it.

Now he feels the need to engage in full-blown personal attacks against a man who has written a letter that states nothing but facts. But who cares about facts? Chief Mannix has a passion, as I do, for preserving the merit system, and he has a firm grasp on the facts surrounding this disgrace of an exam and the idiots at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services who perpetrated it.

Unfortunately, the people in power at the Mayor's Office and the City Council think this is okay. It is disappointing that only Chief Mannix is sounding the alarm. The frenzy to diversify this department (and only this

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department) at any cost will lead to its future ruination. Then the Delbert Cowards of the FDNY will really have something to cackle about.

**MICHAEL F. GALA Jr., Battalion Chief,
FDNY**



**Fire Commissioner Grilled By Judge About
Hiring Bias**

NEXT UP

Guard Teacher, Student DNA

